



Crossing Fronteras

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The objective of this class is to learn about basic records types, research strategies, and requirements needed to locate place of origin and begin researching Hispanic ancestors in their native lands.

CRUCIAL PIECES OF INFORMATION

The requirements to begin research in the records of the country of origin of your ancestor include:

- Name of the ancestor
- Name of the town and country
- Approximate date(s) of birth, marriage, or death
- Enough information to identify the ancestor in a record such as names of parents, spouse, or child

BORDER CROSSING RECORDS

If your ancestor crossed the U.S. border from Mexico between 1895 and 1957, you may want to try searching for him or her in Border Crossing records.

- Generally from 1895-1957
- Better after 1906

INDEX ORGANIZATION

- Similar-sounding surnames may be filed together
- Within a surname, first names that start with the same letter may be filed together
- Within a surname, there may have been no attempt to alphabetize by first name

TYPES OF FORMS

- Form 548, 548-B, or Form I-448, Manifest – These are the best!
- Form Spl. 259, "statistical" an index card
- Form Spl. 442, Nonstatistical

Form 548, 548-B, or Form I-448, Manifest

- Name, Age, Marital status, Place of birth
- Physical description

- Occupation
- Ability to read and write and in what language
- Place of last permanent residence
- Destination
- Purpose for entering U.S.
- Intention to become a U.S. citizen or plans to return to country of previous residence
- Head tax status
- Previous citizenship
- Name and address of the friend or relative whom the alien intended to join
- Persons accompanying the alien
- Name and address of the alien's nearest relative or friend in the country from which he or she came
- If the alien had ever been in the U.S. in the past, the dates and places of such residence or visitation are indicated.

Form Spl. 259, Statistical (index card)

- Name, Age, Sex, Race
- Citizenship ("nationality")
- Last place of residence
- Destination
- Port and date of admission
- Status as immigrant or non immigrant.

Form Spl. 442, Nonstatistical (index card)

- Name, Age, Sex, Marital status
- Occupation
- Ability to read and write
- Place of last permanent residence
- Destination
- Persons accompanying the alien
- Amount of money the alien carried
- If he or she had ever been in the U.S. in the past.
- The reverse side of some cards may be annotated with dates of subsequent admissions to the U.S., destination, and purpose for visiting, such as "6 days to Mission, TX, visiting."

IMPORTANT TIPS

- Always look for the long form – manifest
- If you find your ancestor crossing the border, check to see who else crossed the same day at the same place
- Always look at the images because you might find photos!

OTHER SOURCES FOR PLACE OF ORIGIN

DOCUMENTS IN THE HOME

- Birth, marriage, or death certificates

- Obituaries
- Journals
- Photographs
- Letters
- Family Bible
- Catholic Church records, especially marriages

CITIZENSHIP AND/OR NATURALIZATION PAPERS

- Best records are after 1906
- Declaration of intent usually gives place of birth
- See FamilySearch Research Wiki article “United States Naturalization and Citizenship”

MILITARY RECORDS

- Draft registrations
- All men were required to register regardless of their citizenship status.
- Often contains date and place of birth.

SOCIAL SECURITY RECORDS

- Order the Social Security application <http://www.ssa.gov/foia/request.html>
- Make a FOIA request
- Pay extra for the full copy

VITAL RECORDS

- Marriage certificates and/or licenses
- Death certificates

CENSUS

- To pinpoint arrival date
- To determine citizenship status

ALIEN REGISTRATION FORM

- 1 August 1940-31 March 1944.
- All foreign born non-citizens were required to register.
- Search indexes online <http://www.archives.gov/research/immigration/aliens/a-files-kansas-city.html>
- Request more information before ordering and paying for copies

USEFUL WEBSITES

Immigrant Ancestors Project <http://immigrants.byu.edu/>

PARES Portal de Archivos Españoles www.pares.mcu.es

- Portal de Ibero-American Migratory Movements
- Pasajeros a Indias

Emigrantes Riojanos a América (1880-1936)

<http://ias1.larioja.org/emigra/emigra/presentacion.htm> (Spanish only)

Basques in Western USA: Amerikanuak <http://basquesinwestern.blogspot.com/> (Spanish only)

Castle Garden <http://www.castlegarden.org/>

Ellis Island <http://www.libertyellisfoundation.org/>

Portuguese Passenger Manifests Index, A-Z <http://archives1.dags.hawaii.gov/gsd/cgi-bin/library?a=p&p=home&l=en&w=utf-8>

Arquivo Regional da Madeira, Passports 1872-1910 <http://www.arquivo-madeira.org/homepage.php?lang=1>

Azores, Centro de Conhecimento Dos Acores, Passports, 1875-1939
<http://www.culturacores.azores.gov.pt/ig/passaportes/Default.aspx>

FAMILYSEARCH COLLECTIONS

Puerto Rico, Records of Foreign Residents, 1815-1845

<https://familysearch.org/search/collection/1919700>

Spain, Consular Records of Emigrants <https://familysearch.org/search/collection/1928310>

Spain, Province of Cádiz, Passports 1785-1863

<https://familysearch.org/search/collection/1888427>

Spain, Cantabria, Passports, 1785-1863 <https://familysearch.org/search/collection/2000617>

United States Border Crossings from Mexico to United States, 1903-1957 (Images are found on Ancestry.com) <https://familysearch.org/search/collection/1803932>

FAMILYSEARCH RESEARCH WIKI

For more ideas and more information, please see the following FamilySearch Family History Research Wiki https://familysearch.org/learn/wiki/en/Main_Page articles:

“Hispanic Immigration to the United States”

https://familysearch.org/learn/wiki/en/Hispanic_Immigration_to_the_United_States

“United States Emigration and Immigration”

https://familysearch.org/learn/wiki/en/United_States_Emigration_and_Immigration

“US Immigration Mexican Border Crossings”

https://familysearch.org/learn/wiki/en/US_Immigration_Mexican_Border_Crossings

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